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Saturday Afternoon with Carolyn Yeager, Live,
February 1, 2-4PM Eastern, 11AM -1PM Pacific, on [The White Network](#).
"The Protocols of Zion and Antisemitism"

Carolyn does a little more investigation into the pros and cons of the Protocols and finds some interesting things she never knew before. One is that there is quite an overlap between **Protocols-belief** and **Holocaust-denial** ... and vice versa. That and more, plus your phone calls in the 2nd hour.

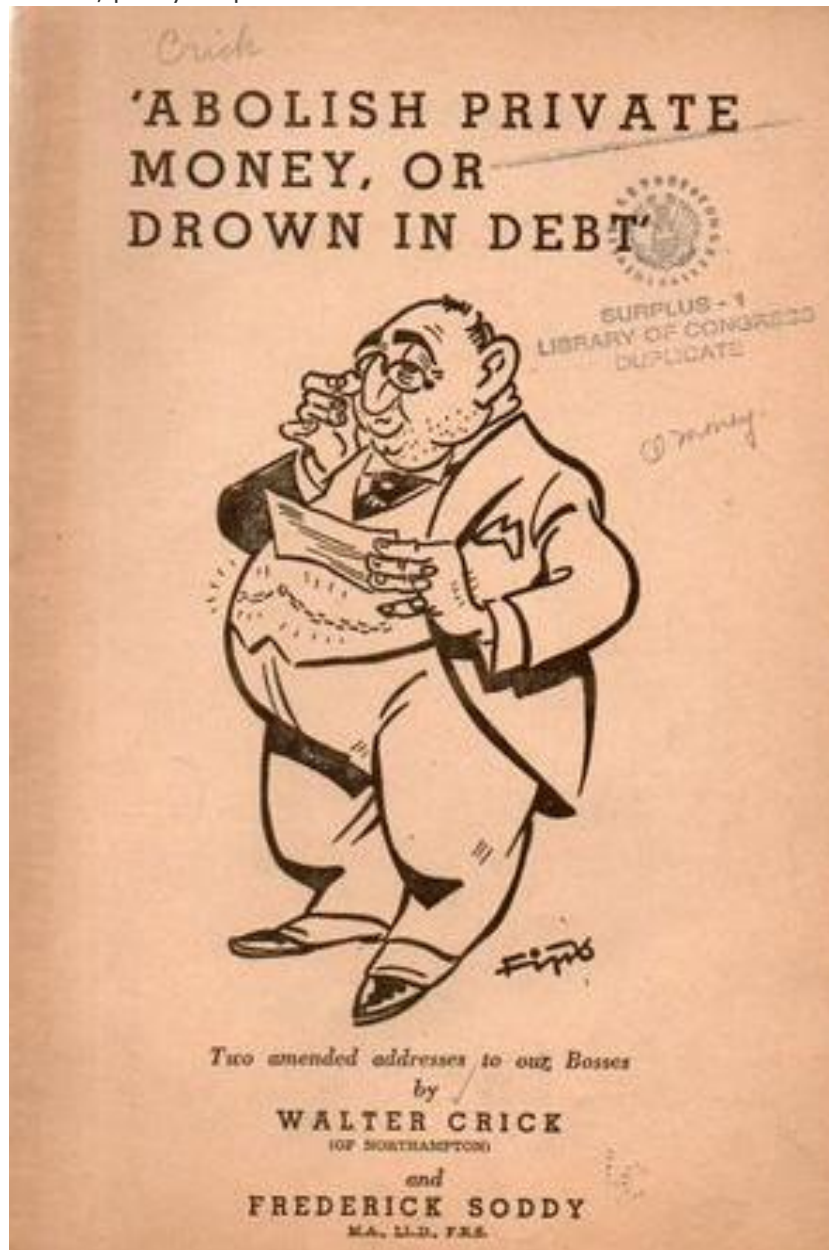


Image: Booklet by Frederick Soddy, British Nobel prize-winning chemist, 1921, and one of the fathers of nuclear fission, in which he quotes from the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* on economic ideas, five years after its so-called exposure as a forgery. His co-author was Walter Crick, uncle of Francis Crick of DNA-fame.

Coming up – 14 February St Valentine's Day, or The Real Holocaust – The Bombing of Dresden - 250,000 - 300,000 dead, and counting...



The Saxon state capital is a particularly clear example of the questionable moral of the Allied bombing.

Dresden was of no interest as a military target. There were hardly any industries of strategic importance, but instead housed many military hospitals and prisoner of war camps on the outskirts.

With its historic buildings and irreplaceable art treasures, therefore also called Florence on the Elbe, Dresden remained up to early 1945 the only major city spared by carpet bombing.

On 13 and 14 February 1945, when the end of the war was anticipated long ago, this gem of Baroque architecture was destroyed by devastating attacks of the British and American Air Force.

Here, the so-called "Gomorra"-tactics was applied. First, the roofs were uncovered by high-explosive bombs, then followed 650,000 incendiary bombs containing inextinguishable phosphorus-fire mixture.

An up to 1000 degrees hot fire storm was created that raged with tremendous violence in the streets of the metropolis on the Elbe.

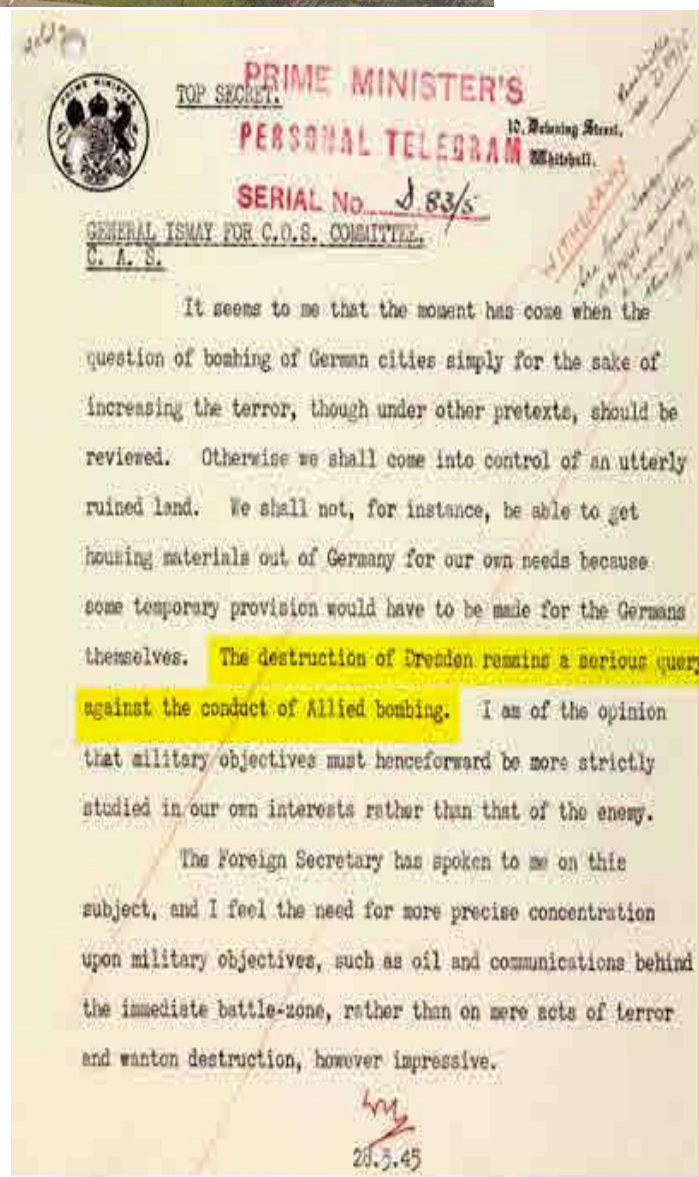
At this time the city was crowded with hundreds of thousands of refugees who fled from the eastern territories before the horrific excesses of the Red Army. The hospitals were completely overcrowded with wounded soldiers.

Due to the gigantic wildfires countless victims were charred beyond recognition, mummified, pulverized, buried and burned. Adult humans shrank to doll size.

The city burned for three days. Huge piles of corpses were burned on large grids or buried in mass graves.

Because of the impending danger of disease, not all bomb dead could be counted before the cremation or funeral, let alone registered or identified.

The convenience of the senseless destruction of German cities gave also among the Allies rise to doubts...



http://nemet_sorstragedia_en.lorinczveger.hu/terrorb_ombazas_dresden_en

Report on 3 Germany 3

"At night we could hear the cries of the women..."

IT is the weight of evidence reaching this office from all kinds of people that has made it finally necessary to publish the grim facts about conditions in Germany today:

British officers prepared to face court-martial for "communicating with the Press" are among the witnesses. Some of this evidence we print here, to supplement the facts given on this page yesterday and the day before.

This is NOT a question of falling for German propaganda. We are convinced that the situation exists and that it can do nothing but harm to the Allies as a whole if it is allowed to continue.

This is what a British major has to say:

"The greatest horror in modern history is at the time of writing taking place in the eastern areas of Germany.

"Many millions of German people have been ejected on to the roads towards Germany from areas of East and West Prussia, Warthegan, Sudetenland, Pomerania, Silesia and East Brandenburg up to the Rivers Oder and Neisse.

"These entire populations are dying by the thousand on the roads from starvation, dysentery and exhaustion.

"Even a cursory visit to the hospitals in Berlin, where some of these people have dragged themselves, is an experience which would make the sights in the concentration camps appear normal."

How did this all begin? Here is a statement signed before Church authorities by twenty Silesians:

by

DAVID WALKER

In the distance we could hear the cries of the women."

From a signed statement by a British officer now in Berlin:

"The situation in Germany is so shocking that immediate arrangements should be made for an Inter-Allied Commission to survey conditions on the spot.

"They should be empowered to make at least provisional arrangements on a big scale to mitigate its worst horrors while a long term policy is worked out. They MUST be allowed to visit all zones.

"The feeling underlying X's report (that of another British officer) is shared by practically all the British troops in Berlin."

From an anti-Nazi German economist, formerly in a concentration camp:

"In the zone east of Berlin, about one third of the former stock of agricultural implements, one fifth of the cattle and one third of the transport facilities remain. It is into this area that millions of refugees have arrived.

"The minimum quantity of potatoes cannot be obtained. . . . This is bound to result



YESTERDAY
she wore the furs and
silks of plundered
Europe
TODAY...

for distribution from this area in the coming year."

From a statement sent to the Allied Control Council in Berlin, signed by leaders of the Protestant Church, the Roman Catholic Church and the German Red Cross:

"About 12,000,000 Germans, coming from the eastern provinces, and German-born citizens of Czechoslovakia, have been driven away from their homes and been forced to trek towards western territories. The consequences have been fatal. . . .

"These really disastrous facts must be dealt with as quickly as possible since they cause the death of millions of Germans and are to be considered an enormous danger for the occupying troops and the whole of Europe."

The above quotations represent only a very small fraction of the facts as given by responsible authorities. They refer only to one part of Germany, but the position has become so serious that it demands a public investigation.

FOR THE THIRD AND LAST TIME WE REPEAT THAT THESE FACTS ARE GIVEN NEITHER TO AROUSE SYMPATHY FOR A BEATEN GERMANY NOR TO INCITE CRITICISM OF THE POLES, CZECHS AND RUSSIANS IN WHOSE AREAS THE EVICTIONS OCCURRED.

IT IS SIMPLY A HUGE PROBLEM, STATED OBJECTIVELY, WHICH AFFECTS

Fredrick Töben: Brief February 2014 Reflections

The above three pages spell out the process of how the German people were/ are physically and mentally destroyed. Firstly, Germans resisted global usury and named names in the process, which is a mortal sin deserving a death sentence; then the Talmudic-Marxist death dialectic is applied to Germany – a prime example is the bombing of German cities in order to win the war and still attempt to retain the moral high ground; and finally, it is employing the Talmudic-Marxist death dialectic in war-time propaganda and beyond to the present, as the following article clearly exemplifies. Ironically, Germany has re-built its destroyed cities and it is still the primary economic power in Europe – but controlled by the USA, which means that Germany still does not have a peace treaty and is in effect an occupied country. The USA is controlled by the Talmudic-Marxist death dialectic and so the “Holocaust” has to be established as an overarching narrative that holds together the post-World-War-Two political/economic world order.

Having read Haviv Rettig Gur’s article a couple of times, it amazes me that a young fellow can write this stuff about Auschwitz without quoting any Revisionist sources – where are the names of Christopherson, Sanning, Stäglich, Walendy, Butz, Faurisson, Fröhlich, Reynouard, Verbeke, Zündel, Rudolf, Graf, Mattogno, Kues, Käther, Krege, Haverbeck, Honsik, Mahler, Stolz, Scully, Weckert, Zimmermann, et. al.?

Now enjoy reading the defamatory attack on the German people because it illustrates that the desperate attempt to extinguish the German mindset, begin over a hundred years ago, 1914-2014, is alive and well, and the “Holocaust” narrative is its vehicle. I certainly do not wish to be a part of such “shared humanity” as Haviv Rettig Gur writes about. His article rests on a false premise, then a feverish imagination takes hold of factual assertions that are outright lies – total fabrications. The well-spring of this kind of smear-campaign writing is found in **Talmud**, then it is projected on to the German people who are legally tied

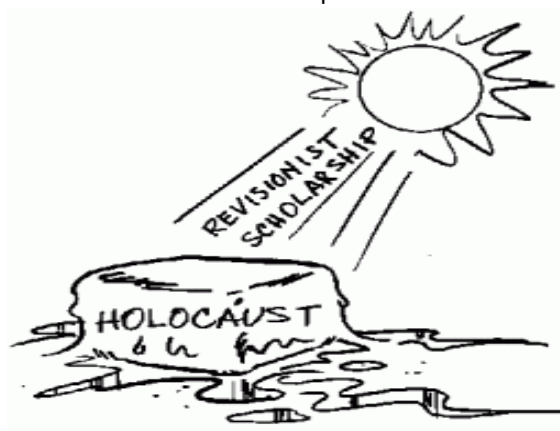
up and cannot defend themselves against such defamatory attacks – or can they? It was Dr Wilhelm Stäglich who said to me that this whole nonsense about Germans having developed an extermination policy – gassing – for Jews is a lie that cannot be tested in a court because this narrative is legally protected through Section 130 of the Criminal Code. However, Stäglich added, if there were enough judges – 50 would do it – who on moral-ethical grounds refused to enforce the law because it is upholding a lie, then the law would become ineffective and unenforcible. Unfortunately German judges and prosecutors are too obsessed with living the good life and thus cannot bring themselves to evaluate the physical facts of the assertions made, as for example, in the following article. This has led me to conclude that the upholders of the “Holocaust” laws are suffering from a massive failure of moral and intellectual nerve. This reasoning led me to title my Teheran December 2006 presentation: *The Holocaust has no reality in Space and Time, only in Memory*. Hence it is unjust to blame Jewish interests for upholding the “Holocaust” narrative that is an actual attack on the German people’s character and culture.

It is always good to recall that in any legal proceedings relating to matters “Holocaust” factual matters were last canvassed when Ernst Zündel in 1988 at his Toronto “false news” trial submitted *The Leuchter Report*, which Germar Rudolf then improved in his *The Rudolf Report*.

So, in essence, the Holocaust Revisionists have won the war over the lies. Unfortunately they do not as yet have the power to enact enquiries where truth matters, and this is a serious cultural problem for the whole global civilisation, which essentially rests on the truth concept. Remember, where truth is no defence, lies flourish and relationships break down – and then the only thing that holds our civilisation together is brute force, the ideal playground for Talmudic-Marxist scholars and their followers who regard truth as a social construct instead of an ideal embedded within the processes of Nature.



Talmudic mindset is not interested in TRUTH



Factual TRUTHS make up their narrative

To murder 6 million people, the Nazis showed us, you don't even need fanatics

Buried at Auschwitz is our certainty in a shared humanity. We now know that any limits to human cruelty, if they exist at all, lie beyond the most rabid viciousness ever conceived

BY [HAVIV RETTIG GUR](#) January 27, 2014, 11:55 am [26](#)



[Haviv Rettig Gur](#) Haviv Rettig Gur is The Times of Israel's political correspondent.

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU — It is hard to convey what was lost at Auschwitz. Through constant retelling, the numbers of the dead are well known. The gas chambers, the enslavement, the wanton killing are paradigmatic chapters of German and European history.

The Holocaust also has a clear meaning for the Jews, its paradigmatic victims: as a dismayingly vast proof that there is no safety in European pluralism, culture or "civilization," in high-minded talk of humanism, individualism and international community, or in calming analyses that downplay future threats.



Prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau during liberation, in January 1945 (photo credit: Wikimedia Commons)

These are all important reflections on the "lessons" and "meaning" of Auschwitz, but they constitute too much of our public conversation about it, almost as though we are willing to discuss any aspect of that event except the choking, shivering bodies of the real-life gas chamber. Auschwitz too often serves as a bludgeon for our social or political agendas, an instrument to express our own fears and passions. There is a vague consensus that Auschwitz reflects something ultimate and untouchable, and so we immediately set about sully it. This use and misuse of the Holocaust is often done for noble, honest reasons, for example by those advocates who, under the banner of "never again," distill the Holocaust into a moral-political lesson about the dangers of the Nazis' imagined ideological errors: racism, chauvinism.

The Holocaust was undoubtedly a product of its time and place, of Nazi racial theory and totalitarian psychology. But its "lesson," its "significance," is both more permanent and more immediate. The vast, meticulously engineered infrastructure of death; the murder conducted according to immutable categories of human beings, erasing the victims' individuality,

and thus any possible pretense to their guilt, in the very framing of the reasoning for their annihilation; and the intimacy of the murders, the physical proximity of murderer and murdered for weeks, months and years — with these hard-won achievements, the Nazis plumbed the depths of human mercilessness.

Seen up close, Nazism was less an experiment in totalitarianism or fanatical collectivism — the usual images associated with the Third Reich — than a test of the elasticity of the very boundaries of humanness.

The engineers

Thus we find an ordinary German company, Topf & Sons from the city of Erfurt (actual sign at the entrance to its administrative offices: "Always glad to serve you") taking pride in being selected to build 46 furnaces to handle the daily disposal of over 10,000 corpses each day at Auschwitz.

The company even applied for a patent in 1941 for its continuously operating "corpse incineration oven," apparently fearful its innovations in human corpse incineration technology would be stolen by competitors.

The engineers were under no illusions as to the purpose of their work. Asked in a March 1946 interrogation whether he knew "that in the gas chamber and in the crematoriums [that he helped build at Auschwitz] there took place the liquidation of innocent human beings," Kurt Prufer, Topf & Sons senior engineer, said he did.

By spring 1943, Prufer, one of the chief civilian engineers of the Auschwitz death machine, not only knew what he had built; he was actively engaged in its upkeep. He visited Auschwitz three times after that spring: in autumn 1943 "to inspect a fault in the construction of a Krema [crematorium] chimney," in early 1944 to inspect the repairs on that chimney, and a final time in the fall of 1944 to consider the engineering challenges of relocating the death facilities as Soviet forces crept nearer.

Auschwitz was a thoughtful, considered project, built and maintained by normative, highly educated family men devoted to their craft. Some were not even members of the Nazi party. By their skilled work, Auschwitz became startlingly efficient. Between 1941 and the closure of the death camp in January 1945, most of the inmates who arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau, at least 85% of them, or some 1.1 million people, were dead within four hours after their arrival.

To achieve that rate of industrial killing, the machinery had to be fast. Arrivals just off the train were told they were headed to showers. Outside the killing complex, the truck containing the Zyklon B gas was painted with the symbol of the Red Cross. In each of the two largest gas chambers, 2,500 arrivals could be killed in a single blow. Two smaller gas chambers could handle 1,800 each.

The bottleneck was not the gassing, which took just six to ten minutes before all the hundreds of arrivals lay in piles of dead, gaping corpses. It was the incineration process that frustrated the SS men throughout the camp's operation and led to constant pressure to improve the facilities. It took 30-40 minutes to burn the three bodies that would fit in each oven (sometimes four, if a baby could be fit in between the adults).

It was this bureaucratic pressure that gave the civilian engineers such an important role in the camp's operation.

By the end of 1944, just weeks before the camp's liberation by Soviet forces, 1,000 Jewish slave laborers were "employed" in the work of the death facilities, doing all parts of the work except the gassing itself. They herded the arrivals into the undressing hall, then into the gas chamber. They carried the bodies to the ovens for incineration, all under the watchful and vindictive eye of the SS guards.

The gassing itself was handled by a handful of SS officers trained to handle the Zyklon B gas.

It was a vast, monstrous mechanism, overseen by careful, thoughtful men and operating with pitiless efficiency for four long years. To murder six million people, the Nazis have convincingly shown us, you don't even need fanatics.

So to say that Auschwitz is a warning against racism, or even against the dangers of desensitization and dehumanization under totalitarian regimes, is to miss the stark reality of the actual experience. At Auschwitz is buried our certainty in a shared humanity, in the undeniable, intrinsic value of the human being. These remain lofty ideals, to be sure, but they are no longer axioms premised on the human condition itself. Any limits to human cruelty, if they exist at all, lie beyond the most rabid viciousness ever conceived in the human imagination.



A Holocaust survivor talks to an Israeli delegation about his years at the Auschwitz death camp, as the delegation visits Auschwitz, Poland, as part of the March of the Living on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 7, 2013. (photo credit: Moshe Milner/GPO/FLASH90)

In a 1965 lecture, twenty years after the Holocaust and at the height of the nuclear fears of the Cold War, the social critic Theodor Adorno would wonder at the way in which Auschwitz shattered the pretense to "civilization" and undermined the universalist discourse of philosophers and moralists.

"In the face of the experiences we have had, not only through Auschwitz but through the introduction of torture as a permanent institution [a reference to the concentration camps] and through the atomic bomb — all these things form a kind of coherence, a hellish unity — in the face of these experiences the assertion that what is has meaning... become[s] a mockery; and in the face of the victims it becomes downright immoral. For anyone who allows himself to be fobbed off with such meaning moderates in some way the unspeakable and irreparable things that have happened by conceding that somehow, in a secret order of being, all this will have had some kind of purpose.

"...There can be no one, whose organ of experience has not entirely atrophied, for whom the world after Auschwitz, that is, the world in which Auschwitz was possible, is the same world as it was before."

The Knesset visits

The Israeli Knesset lifted off from Ben Gurion airport early Monday, on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, for the largest-ever Israeli state visit to Auschwitz.

Some 64 MKs are here, at least six cabinet ministers, a Supreme Court justice, the state comptroller, two dozen survivors and a panoply of journalists, European Jewish leaders and activists, Polish parliamentarians and dozens of security agents. Organized by the nonprofit organization From the Depths, whose executive director Jonny Daniels first brought the idea to Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein and then raised much of the funding for the event, the massive commemoration event marks an apex of over a decade of official commemorations and delegations from the State of Israel to the death camps of Europe.

That such gestures pale into insignificance when set against the event being commemorated is a tautology. But there is also an overarching political message to the commemorations: Israel guards the world's Jews now; Israel remembers; Israel will never allow another Holocaust.

And, perhaps: Israel could have prevented the Holocaust had it been founded sooner.

This is an important declaration, often uttered by Israelis. But it is an unexamined declaration nonetheless. The Nazi race eastward across North Africa was not stopped in autumn 1942 by the nascent Jewish pre-state militias, but by imperial Britain. It is not clear that had Israel been founded by then, and the British withdrawn, that the last living Jewish civilization of the eastern hemisphere, the Hebrew-speaking Israelis, would have survived the war.

The Israelis, heirs to a historical experience of unprecedented mass-death and mass-expulsion across three continents, come to Auschwitz to renew their commitment — and recall the alternative — to Jewish self-reliance.

Yet these messages, though noble, are in an important sense as deaf to Auschwitz's stark reality as the ideology behind "never again." This deafness is evident in the "Holocaust fatigue" often heard from Israelis — in the cheap cynicism of journalists, in the disdain one often hears from young and old alike, in the discomfort around official Holocaust commemorations, there is always a noticeable but unarticulated exhaustion.



An Israeli delegation seen visiting the Auschwitz death camp in Poland, April 8, 2013. (Photo credit: Yossi Zeliger/FLASH90)

It is hard not to sympathize with this fatigue. The reality of Auschwitz is so monstrous, so immense, that the very contemplation of it is necessarily accompanied by guilt. When faced with the insatiable horror of the machinery of death,

expressions of ordinary empathy or ritualized commemoration can seem pale and unfeeling.

And then there are the shallower political uses of the event. Yitzhak Rabin was a Nazi for going to Oslo, the settlers are "Judeo-Nazis," and on and on. On left and right, the very power given to the vocabulary of the Holocaust by the clouds of human ash floating over the air currents of Europe is employed for the polemics of the moment — and as often by Jews as by anyone else.

Throughout it all, in the ignorance and intellectual neglect of political polemics, the actual killing is often lost. The men and women and children, the beating hearts and screaming voices, the killing for killing's sake, the inescapability of death, the irretrievable moral world forever destroyed by Auschwitz — are secondary to the vicissitudes and passions of the moment.

It is a hopeful, touching sign, then, that Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein eschewed traditional Israeli discourse on Israel's own relationship with the Holocaust, and instead issued a simpler, brief statement ahead of the trip that placed the victims themselves as the event's central message.

"The elected parliament of the nation of Israel," he said, "is traveling to the killing valley in order to feel part of the pain [of the victims] and allow its memory to be engraved in our hearts."

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/to-murder-6-million-people-the-nazis-showed-us-you-dont-even-need-fanatics/>

Richard Wagner and his works have been attacked by many who base their world-view on Talmud thinking patterns. Their basic premise is the "antisemitism" concept, among others. In the following the author illustrates the mechanism whereby the "race" concept is used to discredit Wagner's works – of course to no effect among those who understand the deeper meaning of Wagner's works. Interestingly, Barry Millington's translation of *Der Ring Des Nibelungen*, as used in the 2013 Melbourne production, illustrated this quite well. For example, Millington used the "race" word whenever Wagner talked about "Geschlecht", and that is a nonsense – but it serves well the purpose of gently discrediting Wagner's works. "Geschlecht" cannot really be translated because in German it can mean "clan", "extended family", or male/female sex, but certainly not "race", which in German means "Rasse". He is an expert in matters Wagner, so why would Millington do this? – Fredrick Töben

***Parsifal* and Race**

By: Derrik Everett

- 1. Wagner's last card**
- 2. Wagner, Gobineau and Parsifal**
- 3. Exclusion and inclusion**
- 4. Race and racial purity**
- 5. Semites and anti-Semites**
- 6. The Aryan Christ**
- 7. Conclusions**

1. Wagner's last card

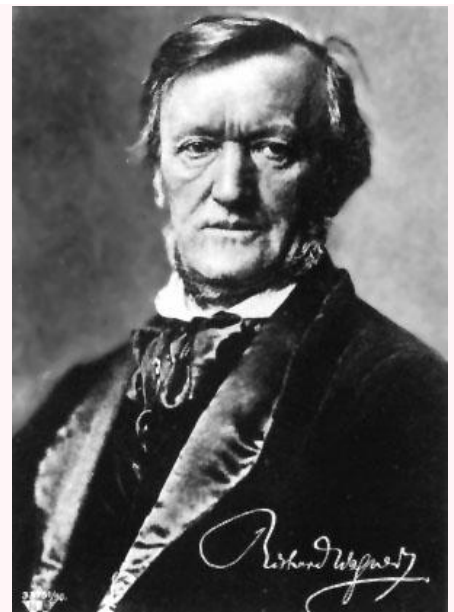
"As Cosima recorded in her diary on 28.3.1881, Richard Wagner called *Parsifal* his 'last card'. In the immediate context what he had in mind was a retort to [Gobineau](#), who had characterized the Germans as the 'last card' of nature."

[Dieter David Scholz, program book for Parsifal at the Berlin Staatsoper, March 2002. As John Deathridge has pointed out, this metaphor actually originated with August F. Pott in his critique of Gobineau, which Wagner had read.]

It has become impossible, when discussing his dramas and in particular the last of them, *Parsifal*, to avoid the topic of Richard Wagner's anti-Semitism and the claim, forcefully advanced by Robert Gutman in 1968, that Wagner was a racist. I do not mean, of course, that these subjects should be ignored. Indeed they deserve to be addressed. What is unfortunate is that discussion

of them soon turned into a war of words in which truth was the first casualty.

Given the posthumous association of Wagner and the Bayreuth Festival with [Hitler](#), who was an enthusiast for Wagner's music, and by extension with Nazism it was inevitable that commentators, especially in Germany, would regard Wagner's dramas as tainted by Nazism.



In the vanguard of those who attacked Wagner and his heritage in the postwar period was Theodor Adorno. For Adorno, Wagner's dramas were inherently "völkisch". Adorno suggested that some of the characters, such as Mime and [Klingsor](#), were anti-Semitic caricatures. Given Richard Wagner's frequent anti-Semitic remarks, many have found this claim plausible. Recent commentators have built upon Adorno's view of Wagner and his works, some of them (notably Hartmut Zelinsky and Barry Millington) developing ingenious theories about subtly-coded anti-Semitic and racist messages that they allege are cleverly hidden, deep in Wagner's libretti.

In 1968 Robert Gutman published a popular book about Wagner (*Richard Wagner: the Man, his Mind and his Music*) in which he portrayed his subject as a racist, psychopathic, proto-Nazi monster. Despite the reservations expressed by reviewers about the quality of Gutman's scholarship, this book has been a best-seller; especially in the USA, where an entire generation of students has been encouraged to accept Gutman's caricature of Richard Wagner. Even intelligent people, who have either never read Wagner's writings or tried to penetrate them and failed -- the situation is not made any more favourable to Wagner in the English-speaking world by the scarcity of good translations -- have read Gutman's book and accepted his opinions as facts. Since Gutman's book was a seminal contribution to the ill-tempered debate about Wagner's alleged racism, the relevant sections of the book will be considered at length in this article.

In chapter 15 of his Wagner book, Robert Gutman put forward a remarkable interpretation of *Parsifal*. So remarkable that one might be tempted to believe that both this chapter and some fantastic passages earlier in the book (such as his analysis of *Tristan und Isolde*) had been written under the influence of the "mind-expanding" drugs that were popular on US campuses at that time. Ignoring all considerations of [chronology](#) and taking no account of the available, relevant documentation (e.g. Wagner's letters to [Mathilde](#)

[Wesendonk](#)) concerning the lengthy creative process which resulted in *Parsifal*, Gutman produced an interpretation of Wagner's last drama as a racist tract in which homosexuality and vegetarianism were prominent themes. According to Gutman, the libretto of *Parsifal* was rooted in ideas that preoccupied Wagner in the last years of his life, specifically 1878-82. This is Gutman's central thesis concerning *Parsifal*.

Gutman knew that Wagner, like many intellectuals of his time, had been interested in the writings of Charles Darwin, whose books Wagner read during the 1870's. Ignoring the fact that the first [Prose Draft](#) of *Parsifal* had been written long before this, Gutman supposed that the underlying ideas of *Parsifal* were those of social Darwinism. He suggested that the embattled community of the [Grail](#) had been alarmed to observe natural selection working against its distinctive Aryanism ... here was the decisive racial crisis that grew into an uncompromising struggle for power. So the distress of [Monsalvat](#) that emerges during act one -- and which has deepened by act three -- of Wagner's drama is, according to Gutman, a racial crisis.

There seem to be many people -- some of them both intelligent and educated -- who take for granted that this account, in terms of racial crisis, homosexuality and vegetarianism, is a valid (or even the only possible valid) interpretation of *Parsifal*. After all, what else could the work be about other than race, pederasty and diet? In recent years Gutman's ideas have been repeated and developed in a stream of books about (and mostly against) Wagner and his ideas (as their authors claim to understand them). The result is that, at least in the English-speaking world, there is a widespread perception and often a deep-rooted conviction that Wagner hated specific racial minorities, that this hatred was the source of his creativity, and that it found its fullest expression in the libretto of *Parsifal*. If anyone points out that none of this is even remotely true, they can only expect to be shouted down by those whose prejudices are stronger than their concern for facts.

2. Wagner, Gobineau and Parsifal

Gobineau as the Inspiration of *Parsifal*

As a result of Gutman's claims about the influence of [Count Gobineau](#) on Wagner in general and on the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal* in particular, it now seems obligatory to refer to [Gobineau](#) at least once in the program book for any production of *Parsifal*. So why did Gutman think that Wagner had come under the influence of [Gobineau](#) -- and why did he suggest that this influence had affected the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal*?

Gutman knew that Wagner had met the self-styled "Count" [Gobineau](#) -- a diplomat, writer and racial theorist -- briefly in Rome in November 1876 and again

in Venice in October 1880. Also that he had been a guest of the Wagner family in Bayreuth in the spring of 1881. Ignoring all considerations of logic, evidence and [chronology](#), Gutman assumed that [Gobineau](#) had influenced the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal* which Wagner completed in the spring of 1877. From this assumption -- it was never anything more than an assumption -- ignoring the evidence that documents the development of the *Parsifal* scenario from 1857 to 1865, and failing to understand the uneasy relationship that developed between [Gobineau](#) and Wagner in 1881 and 1882,

Gutman developed an elaborate theory of the genesis of *Parsifal*.

The closer one examines respectively Wagner's prose writings, the [Gobineau](#) correspondence³, the many brief references to [Gobineau](#) in the last volume of Cosima's Diaries (seen in relation to the [Gobineau](#) correspondence) and not least the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal*, the more absurd Gutman's theory appears.

Not only Gutman but also the school of "lunatic fringe" writers who have accepted and built upon his interpretations, assumed that the inspiration for *Parsifal* was found in a conversation that Wagner had with [Gobineau](#) on their first meeting in 1876; ignoring Wagner's own account of the genesis of *Parsifal* as given in his autobiography and disregarding the detailed [Prose Draft](#) that Wagner had sent to his patron King Ludwig in 1865. Gutman and his disciples further assumed that [Gobineau's](#) racial theories, as set out in his book *On the Inequality of Human Races*, influenced the libretto of *Parsifal*, completed in the spring of 1877. Marc Weiner for example, in *Richard Wagner and the anti-Semitic Imagination*, wrote that Wagner's final music-drama was infused with the purportedly scientific theories of racial difference of Count [Gobineau](#). These writers ignore the inconvenient facts that Wagner had not read any of [Gobineau's](#) writings until 1880¹ and that he had scarcely exchanged a few words (written or spoken) with [Gobineau](#) before 1881. They also choose to ignore the fact that Wagner (according to Cosima's Diaries) did not begin his study of Gobineau's writings with the treatise on race -- a curious decision if, as Gutman et al. would have us believe, Wagner was obsessed with this subject -- but with [Gobineau's](#) travel writings and fiction. We can partially excuse Gutman -- although not Weiner -- because he did not have access to Cosima's Diaries, from which it is clear that Wagner was in vigorous disagreement with [Gobineau's](#) racist ideas. Only partially, however, because Gutman presumed to develop an elaborate theory without a foundation in evidence. Some of that evidence -- such as the Gobineau correspondence -- would have been available to him had he taken the trouble to find it.

In case any reader does not see the difficulty here, it is this: Robert Gutman claimed that a [libretto](#) that Wagner completed in 1877 -- which closely follows a draft made in 1865 -- was influenced by ideas that Wagner first encountered in the spring of 1881. Later writers, whose view of Wagner is largely derived from Gutman's book, have taken on board this logical impossibility because it suits them better than the facts.

Wagner and Gobineau 1876-1882

Gutman failed to mention, in his account of the short-lived relationship between Gobineau and Wagner, that during the visit of [Gobineau](#) to Bayreuth in 1881 there

were heated arguments between the two men in which Wagner refused to accept [Gobineau's](#) opinions, which were consistently based on racist principles. When Gobineau condemned the Irish (as a Celtic race) for opposing their English masters (as a Germanic race), Wagner took the side of the oppressed. When Gobineau supported slavery (of those he regarded as inferior races), Wagner argued for its abolition. These facts are ignored, as inconvenient, by those who want to see Wagner as a disciple of Gobineau.

After reading [Gobineau's Essay](#), Wagner returned to an article he had begun writing earlier that year, *Herodom and Christendom*. Although the article had not been inspired by [Gobineau's](#) writings, it was now, in June 1881, reworked to begin with an examination of [Gobineau's](#) ideas as presented in the *Essay*. The article is one of the so-called "regeneration writings" that were, according to Gutman, closely related to the ideas underlying *Parsifal*². (Those who are familiar with one or more of the many biographies of Richard Wagner will know that everything in his life is related, directly or indirectly, to everything else; so the real question to be answered is not **whether** his last music-drama is related to the "regeneration writings" but **how** it is related to them). In an attempt to repair his relationship with [Gobineau](#), Wagner now began his article, in a conciliatory tone, with a summary of [Gobineau's](#) theories. It is unfortunate that an entire school of writers, inspired by Gutman and blinded by hatred, have chosen to take quotations from this first part of the article -- a summary of theories which Wagner rejected in the second part of the article -- and to misrepresent them as being Wagner's own ideas and as evidence of Wagner's alleged racism!

Even in the clumsy translation by Wm. Ashton Ellis, any intelligent reader of *Herodom and Christendom* should be able to distinguish Wagner's own views from his summary of [Gobineau's](#) views. It is remarkable that Gutman failed to grasp this distinction. It must be admitted that the obscure language (even in the original) and the associative nature of Wagner's thought does not help the reader in this article or in any of his later writings. None of this excuses Gutman's fundamental misreading of the article, nor can it be excused by his failure to investigate the circumstances under which it was written.

Wagner did agree with [Gobineau](#) on one point: that there had been a degeneration of the human race. It is an idea that dates back at least to Plato. [Gobineau](#) held that this degeneration was the result of miscegenation, that is, the mixing of the blood (i.e. genetic material) of nobler races with that of less noble races. There is nothing to indicate that Wagner accepted this idea, although it is clear from his notebooks that it intrigued him⁴, in the context of Darwin's theories. Gutman made the mistake (one that his imitators have taken on board) of seeing Wagner's interest as acceptance; and

he went entirely off the rails with the suggestion that [Amfortas'](#) sickness (an [element of the scenario since 1859 or earlier](#)) was the result of miscegenation, the mixing of his blood with that of the supposedly inferior [Kundry](#) in an ill-advised sexual encounter. (Why Kundry should be an inferior is not clear; after all, in her incarnation as [Herodias](#) she was a princess). Once again, there is nothing in Wagner's [libretto](#) to support such an idea: [Amfortas'](#) incurable wound is a representation of the suffering which, according to [Schopenhauer](#), is an inevitable part of life; the cause of this suffering is desire.

In summary, Gutman was rash enough to launch an extended and vitriolic attack on Wagner on the basis of a superficial reading of *Herodom and Christendom*, which had been written in a context that Gutman did not understand. He failed to understand it because he had not done the necessary research. In short, the last chapter of Gutman's book is the result of the author's misguided fantasy combined with his stupidity and incompetence.

A Race of Saints

[Gobineau](#), not Wagner, was the racist. [Gobineau](#) believed that there had been a superior race, which he labelled as "Germanic" but not as "German"; he thought the English were "Germanic" while the Germans were a bastard mixture of Celtic and other supposedly inferior racial elements. Although in agreement with [Gobineau's](#) negative assessment of the Germans, Wagner explained in *Herodom and Christendom* that he did not agree that there was, or had ever been, a superior race, a race of heroes; one that had fallen out of the sky, perhaps, or descended from gods. On the other hand he believed in a "race" of saints or sages, of which Christ was the noblest example. The saints or sages were beings motivated by compassion and by a sense of universal suffering which made them aware of the essential unity of the human race. It was by finding this unity that mankind could be regenerated. It is clear that the ideas expressed by Wagner -- his own ideas -- in this essay have nothing in common with [Gobineau's Essay](#) or with racism of any kind and that Wagner's own ideas are consistent with the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal* completed four years earlier.

It is also clear that Wagner was not using the word "race" (or any of the words that might be translated as "race") in the same sense in which "race" had been used by [Gobineau](#). This has not prevented various followers of Gutman from taking Wagner's statements out of context and interpreting his references to "race" in the most literal sense. There is a general difficulty with Wagner's writings that is repeatedly exploited by the anti-Wagnerian lunatic fringe: it is that Wagner sometimes used words with a meaning that was not the most obvious one. As a result it is easy to take sentences or phrases out of context and present them as meaning something quite different from what

Wagner intended. It is possible, however -- except perhaps for those who are blinded by their hatred for Wagner and his works -- to discern what Wagner intended, if one reads enough context around the passage whose meaning is sought. Wagner did not express himself concisely; in many cases it is necessary to read many paragraphs, or even an entire article, to understand what Wagner meant. His often unconventional usage does not help the reader, even if it does help those who wish to misrepresent him by quoting a few words out of context. To speak of a race of saints does not constitute racism.

This problem concerns not only Wagner's prose but also his poetry. As Gutman wrote (in this case with some justification) the text of *Parsifal* is obscure and elliptical. It is a work that almost entirely consists of symbols and metaphors, a fact which makes it puzzling: in *Parsifal* little is directly named by the mysterious text or elusive motifs, and the audience is left to divine meanings. Here Gutman was admitting that he had failed to understand the text (by which I mean, both words and music). He failed to do so because he did not examine and evaluate the relevant primary material. If he was not prepared to do the work, he should have limited his comments to an acknowledgement that he was unable to *divine meanings* in *Parsifal*. What Gutman did, however, was to fabricate a fantastic interpretation that has little connection with the words and music of the score. Many people, including an entire generation of opera producers, have mistaken Gutman's interpretative fantasy for an explanation of Wagner's text.

Gutman Calls His Witnesses

The arguments that Gutman advanced to support his interpretation were quite extraordinary. Firstly he held that the work was *not only un-Christian, it is anti-Christian*. In support he called upon [Nietzsche](#), ignoring the inconvenient fact that [Nietzsche](#) had reacted against the work because he saw it as Christian, not as anti-Christian! Gutman also assumed (possibly on the basis of [Hermann Rauschnig's](#) book) that [Hitler](#) had interpreted *Parsifal* as a work of exclusion, in which compassion was restricted to members of the community, and therefore that *Parsifal* was *the gospel of National Socialism*. The first problem with this argument is that we cannot and should not assume that [Hitler's](#) interpretation of *Parsifal* (or anything else) was valid. The second problem, perhaps less obvious to Gutman writing while [Rauschnig](#) was still regarded with only limited suspicion by serious historians, was that we do not know for sure how [Hitler](#) interpreted *Parsifal*. We do know that the other major ideologue of the Nazi party, [Alfred Rosenberg](#), regarded *Parsifal* with distaste. So there is no reason to suppose that *Parsifal* was, as Gutman asserted, *the gospel of National Socialism* or even that the ideas underlying the drama were remotely

compatible with Nazi ideology. Certainly there is nothing in Wagner's [libretto](#) to support Gutman's idea that Wagner was advocating *selective* compassion. It is clear from Wagner's [libretto](#), despite its sometimes "mysterious text", that compassion is to be offered to all and expected from all.

Was Wagner a Disciple of Gobineau?

Gutman's misrepresentation of the encounter between two grumpy old men, [Gobineau](#) and Wagner, can perhaps be excused by the facts that he did not have access either to Cosima's Diaries ¹ or to the Wagner-[Gobineau](#) correspondence ³. This excuse cannot be extended to later writers who have chosen to adopt and repeat Gutman's view that [Gobineau](#) was an important influence on Wagner, despite the increasingly available and substantial evidence proving that Gutman was seriously in error: Wagner was not a disciple of [Gobineau](#). Not at any time, not in any sense, and not in the least degree. Not only did Wagner reject

Gobineau's racist ideas, he did so emphatically: see for example Cosima's diary entry for 18 May 1881. Gutman's allegation that Wagner's *Parsifal* libretto was influenced by [Gobineau](#) was not even supported by the evidence that was available to Gutman in 1968. In the light of Cosima's Diaries (published in 1976) and the [Gobineau](#) correspondence (published in 2000) Gutman's ideas -- and those who have accepted them without question -- look even more ridiculous than they did before.

In the program notes referred to at the start of this article, Dieter David Scholz states that Cosima's Diaries leave no doubt, that [Gobineau's](#) influence on the development of *Parsifal* was extremely small. He is too generous.

The Diaries and the [Gobineau](#) correspondence leave no doubt that his influence on Wagner was negligible and that his influence on *Parsifal* was exactly zero.

3. Exclusion and Inclusion

The idea that *Parsifal* is a work about (and even advocating) exclusivity -- a community that limits its membership and its compassion to a chosen group -- has become commonplace since Gutman's book appeared. Those who accept this idea might pause to recall that the only authority Gutman cited for it was [Adolf Hitler](#) (in a source which has become regarded with suspicion by modern historians). They might also consider what happens in *Parsifal*, rather than in the distorted account of the drama given by Gutman. At the start of *Parsifal* we see and hear about a community in stagnation and decay. The king, [Amfortas](#), who is both temporal and spiritual leader of the community, has commanded that his knights should stay within his domain, rather than venture out into the world, where [Klingsor](#) might defeat them. The community has turned inward -- and clearly for Wagner (surprisingly if we accept Gutman's characterization of Wagner as a racist, misogynist and ultra-nationalist) this is a bad thing.

At the end of *Parsifal* we see the arrival of a new king, a new temporal and spiritual leader, who commands that the [Grail](#) shall be uncovered -- and never covered again. The community will be re-established and it will turn outward. He brings with him a woman, [Kundry](#), who enters the sanctuary as the first woman ever to do so. This is one of the ideas that *Parsifal* absorbed from the unfinished drama *Die Sieger*. Just as the Buddha, in the third act of *Die Sieger*, decided to admit a woman

(the first of many) to his religious community, [Parsifal](#) does the same. The fact that [Kundry](#) dies in the sanctuary (which is an idea found in Indian traditions) does not reduced the importance of this act. It is also symbolized (at one of several levels of symbolism) by the reunion of the masculine symbol of the [Spear](#) and the feminine symbol of the [Grail](#). This is no longer a sterile domain where masculine values are the only values. The eternal feminine has entered the domain of the [Grail](#), where it will remain as long as the feminine symbol, the [Grail](#), remains uncovered. The [Grail](#) community has become inclusive: a community that is one and undivided, as Wagner consistently argued that mankind had to be.

In his last years Wagner slowly resigned himself to the fact that he would not live to finish [Die Sieger](#). His creative powers were beginning to fade as he struggled to finish the orchestration of *Parsifal*. He gave Cosima an excuse for not working on [Die Sieger](#): in *Parsifal*, he said, he had expressed his idea of a community. It is not, as Gutman assumed, the community turned in on itself, the exclusive community, that was his ideal but the regenerated community that begins to appear in the closing minutes of the drama. A community in which there are both men and women, both masculine and feminine values. A community that has turned outward, never to close in on itself again. An open community in which there is compassion for all, both for those within the community and for those outside it.

4. Race and racial purity

A Tale of Two Wagners

"I sometimes think there are two Wagners in our culture, almost unrecognizably different from one another: the Wagner possessed by those who know his work, and the Wagner imagined by those who know him only by name and reputation ... I have innumerable times heard well-meaning people say in minatory tones such things as, 'After all, one can't ignore the ideas behind these works', as if the ideas were quite different from what they are. Such people seem to think they know that the ideas are of a dictatorial and chauvinistic nature. This often goes together with another attitude that is widespread among people lacking acquaintance with the actuality of Wagner's work, and that is a sense of personal superiority towards it."

So Bryan Magee in his most recent book (*Wagner and Philosophy, or The Tristan Chord*) describes the gap between, on the one hand, Wagner as he is known to those who have studied his works, and on the other hand Wagner's misleading reputation as it is known by everybody else. Since everyone "knows" that Wagner was a racist, a chauvinistic nationalist and a womanizer, etc. then these things must be true. It comes as a surprise to many, myself included, to discover that this reputation is untrue and undeserved. Not least in the widely held view that Wagner was obsessed with ideas about race.

As anyone who has studied Wagner's prose and poetic works -- whether in the original German (or in a few cases in the original French) or in the rather odd translations of Wm. Ashton Ellis (the *Prose Works* in

eight volumes) -- will know, ideas about race and racial purity do not exactly leap out at the reader from every page. In five of the volumes of Ellis' *Prose Works* there are scarcely any references to race -- no more in any one of those volumes than can be counted on the fingers of one hand -- and in the remaining three volumes such references are limited to a few paragraphs in certain articles or essays, with the exception of a single late essay. So in the prose works alone, there is by no means enough evidence to support the hypothesis that Wagner was obsessed with ideas of race and racial purity. Further, such ideas are only to be found, if they are to be found, in the poetic works when they are subjected to aggressive and controversial analysis.

Something else that might strike the attentive reader is that the German word for "race", namely "Rasse", is conspicuous by its absence from Wagner's prose and poetic writings. If the books by Gutman and the lunatic fringe were to be believed, then one would expect that the word "Rasse" or its derivatives would be leaping out from every page of Wagner's writings. If anyone can give me one quotation from Wagner's writings in which he used the word "Rasse" then I should be most grateful because I have found none. Not a single example.

Dynasty of Kings and Lineage of Heroes

This does not mean that Wagner never mentions race, in a weaker sense of the word, even though the instances are few and far between. The word he prefers to use, most often, is "Geschlecht". There is no exact equivalent of this relatively elastic term in English, although there are cognates in most Germanic

languages. One sense of "Geschlecht" is "sex", e.g. "das andere Geschlecht", the other sex. Another sense of "Geschlecht", the one that Wagner tended to use, means extended-family, dynasty or descent. Thus in the second act of *Lohengrin*, Ortrud publicly challenges Elsa as follows:

**Kannst du uns es sagen,
ob sein Geschlecht,
sein Adel wohl bewährt?**

The word "Geschlecht" also appears in *Parsifal*:

**Oh weh'! Wie trag' ich's im Gemüte,
in seiner Mannheit stolzer Blüte
des siegreichsten Geschlechtes Herrn
als seines Siechtums Knecht zu seh'n!**

Here [Gurnemanz](#) is referring to the lineage of [Amfortas](#), i.e. the dynasty founded by [Titurel](#). This might be seen as the same "Geschlecht" that was referred to earlier, the lineage of Lohengrin and [Parsifal](#), since (according to Wolfram) both [Parsifal](#) and the king he will succeed are descended from the [Titurel](#). That there is a common lineage is implicitly assumed in Wagner's *libretto*, perhaps because he wanted to emphasise that [Parsifal](#) gains the kingship through merit, not through right of inheritance. The point here is that in both passages "Geschlecht" (a generic term for race or

**Can you tell us,
whether his descent
and nobility are well proved?**

**O woe! How it grieves me to see,
in his prime,
this lord of a victorious race
fall a slave to this sickness!**

kin) means a royal lineage. It does not mean, as Gutman wrongly assumed, a race of "distinctive Aryanism". Incidentally, [Titurel](#) was "siegreich", victorious, in the sense that he had won the [Grail](#); his descendant [Parsifal](#) will become the "siegreich Vollendete", the victoriously perfect, by overcoming the world.

The word "Geschlecht" does not reappear in act one. One might think this curious, given Gutman's insistence that the drama is about race. It turns up again in act two:

**Noch nie sah' ich
solch' zieres Geschlecht**

Here [Parsifal](#) is addressing the [flower maidens](#). No doubt Gutman assumed that they were vegetables of "distinctive Aryanism". Otherwise the word "Geschlecht" does not reappear in *Parsifal*, nor does "Rasse" appear. The only other word that appears in

**Never before have I seen
such a handsome race**

the [libretto](#) that reasonably might be translated as "race" is "Stamm" (which Ellis consistently translated as "stem" but which might be better rendered as "lineage" or "dynasty"):

**Sein Stamm verfiel mir,
unerlöst soll der Heiligen Hüter
mir schmachten**

Here, in the first scene of act two, [Klingsor](#) is referring to [Amfortas](#). Once again the reference is to the dynasty of [Titurel](#), the royal race of [Grail](#) kings. In the third act there appear no words that might be translated as "race". As noted above, it has become commonplace to

**His dynasty ruined by my magic,
the holy guardian will languish
unredeemed**

speak of *Parsifal* as a work filled with racism. Is it not remarkable that in the entire [libretto](#) there are only three words (two instances of "Geschlecht" and one of "Stamm") that might be translated as "race"? Perhaps Gutman's idea about the "racial crisis" was wrong?

The Pure Fool

Another of Gutman's claims is that *Parsifal* contains a subtext about racial purity. There are two small problems here. The first is that Wagner never stated, or even hinted, of the existence of such a subtext. The second is that the words "racial purity", or anything similar, never appear in the [libretto](#). The word "purity" does appear, of course. It is through "purity"

that [Parsifal](#) is able to overcome and destroy the power of [Klingsor](#), the lord of illusion, and it is through "purity" that he achieves the enlightenment that qualifies him to become the [Grail](#) king. The meaning of purity in "[Parsifal's purity](#)" was explicitly stated by Wagner in a letter to [Mathilde Wesendonk](#). There is nothing **racial** about it at all.

5. Semites and anti-Semites

Wagner's Anti-Semitism

Richard Wagner revealed his anti-Semitic views in his notorious [Judaism in Music](#) (1850), an article that seems to be aimed mainly at [Meyerbeer](#), who is not mentioned by name, and to a lesser extent at Mendelssohn, who is. His hostility towards Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn and other Jewish musicians seems to have faded into the background after this outburst, and we find only occasional anti-Semitism in his writings until 1868, when Wagner's paranoia about the "Jews and Jesuits" in the Munich press and elsewhere led to his ill-judged decision to republish the essay. In his later years, as revealed by Cosima's Diaries, Wagner was

constantly muttering about the "Jews and Jesuits", who were supposedly conspiring to frustrate his plans, except when he was directing his anger against the French.

As mentioned above, Theodor Adorno put forward the opinion that some of Wagner's characters were anti-Semitic caricatures. There was already a tradition of perceiving "Jewish" characteristics in Mime. Although when Wagner wrote down for insertion in the score of *Siegfried* a description of Mime, emphasizing these supposedly "Jewish" characteristics, he realised that he had accurately described himself.

Kundry, Herodias and a Castrated Sorcerer

The allegation that there are anti-Semitic elements in the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal* mainly concerns [Kundry](#) and less often [Klingsor](#). In the case of the former, we are told that the [Herodias](#), whom [Klingsor](#) reveals was [Kundry](#) in an earlier life, was the princess of Judea who married first the Tetrarch Philip and then, after his death, his brother Herod. She appears in the New Testament, where we read that she intrigued to bring about the death of John the Baptist, who had condemned her life-style. Since [Herodias](#) was a notoriously bad person, it is unlikely that many girls were named after her, and therefore [Klingsor's](#) line Herodias warst du is a specific historical reference

(as well as being a subtle reference to the [Herodes](#) of German folklore).

The flaw in the argument that Kundry is an anti-Semitic element of the drama is that, as Wagner knew but those who argue for [Herodias](#) as an anti-Semitic reference obviously do not know, the biblical [Herodias](#) was not Jewish! Later Wagner would have read in Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus* (if Cosima, who had read it some years before, had not told him already) that [Herodias](#) was notorious for her rejection of the Jewish religion, which she held in open contempt. A less obvious candidate for a "Jewish" character would be hard to imagine.

The idea that Kundry is a representative of Jewry, or of a supposedly Jewish element in the human mind, while being at the same time an embodiment of the eternal feminine, was put forward by Otto Weininger in his strange book *Geschlecht und Charakter* (known in English as *Sex and Character*, although it should be noted that the ambiguity of *Geschlecht* is lost in the translation), Vienna, 1903. Weininger's projection of his misogynistic ideas on to Wagner's *Parsifal* has been endorsed by Nike Wagner in her recent book *Wagner Theatre* (translated into English under the title, *The Wagners: Dramas of a Musical Dynasty*):

"Weininger's model of woman, represented as a hopeless existential paradox, resembles Kundry in every respect. Parsifal almost seems to play out the arguments of Sex and Character in operatic form - or does Sex and Character state the theoretical assumptions from which Parsifal proceeds? One could argue that Weininger was more Wagnerian than Wagner: he even 'corrects' Wagner at certain points, as when he argues that Kundry should have died in Act Two, at the moment when Parsifal resisted her attempts to seduce him, rather than undergoing the prolonged religious conversion of the last act."

[*The Wagners, Nike Wagner, tr. E. Osers and M. Downes, 2000, pp. 124-5.*]

If Nike Wagner proves anything in the chapter from which I have quoted above, it is that one can twist her great-grandfather's dramas to say anything you want, provided that you are permitted to 'correct' Wagner! Those who, like Nike Wagner, choose to see *Parsifal* through the distorting lens of *Sex and Character* are entitled to do so, of course; but we should not take too seriously the claim that the interpretation of Wagner's work constructed by the deranged Weininger provides insight. Weininger's reading of *Parsifal* is just as much a subjective fantasy as the one put forward by Gutman, 65 years later.

Then there is *Klingsor*. Some (including Marc Weiner, who has a lot of strange ideas about Wagner) have argued that *Klingsor* is Jewish because he *castrated* himself and castration is very much like circumcision, which is a Jewish tradition. It might be news to Marc Weiner and others that castration is, in fact, not much like circumcision.

Friends and Lovers

As noted above, Wagner was prejudiced not only against "Jewishness" (which he described as "a purely metaphysical concept") but also against the French and their "civilisation". As Bryan Magee states forcefully in his recent book about Wagner and philosophy, however we might view these prejudices, Wagner himself did not regard them as racial but as cultural. The fact that he was able to have close, even intimate, friends who were of French origin (like Cosima) or of Jewish origin (like Tausig, Porges or Rubinstein) confirms that his prejudices were not racial. In relation to *Parsifal* there is an extreme case of the apparent contradiction in which Wagner could reject a nation but accept its individual members. During the composition of the

music, *Judith Gautier* played some kind of *symbolic role*, perhaps allowing Wagner to some extent to recreate (at least within his mind) the relationship with *Mathilde Wesendonk* that had enabled him to write *Tristan*. Not only was Judith of Jewish descent but she was French. Wagner's prejudices did not prevent him from having a love affair with Judith, almost entirely by correspondence (which was mostly destroyed by Wagner himself) between Wagner in Bayreuth and Judith in Paris. Something of Judith might be seen in the *Kundry* of act two, and it is only in this sense that there is anything Jewish -- or French -- about "mademoiselle Cundrie".

6. The Aryan Christ

The charge that *Parsifal* is the Aryan Christ, a redeemer who does not have to die, is one of the stranger ideas to have appeared and reappeared in recent decades. The first question that arises is whether *Parsifal* was intended as a Christ figure. Wagner vehemently denied that this was the case, on several occasions: I did not have the Saviour in mind at all, he said once. The suspicion remains, however, that he might have done.

The words "Erlösung" (redemption or release) and "Heil" (salvation) are to be found in most of Wagner's operas and dramas. Also in *Parsifal*, where there are no few references to "Heiland" (saviour) and "Erlöser" (redeemer). All of the references to "Heiland" and at least some of those to "Erlöser" appear to refer to Christ, although that title is never mentioned. Some of the references to "Erlöser" are ambiguous, however, such as *Kundry's* words to *Parsifal* in the second act:

**Bist du Erlöser,
was bannt dich, Böser,
nicht mir auch zum Heil
dich zu einen?**

**If you are a redeemer,
what evil stops you,
from uniting with me
for my salvation?**

And then:

**Die Welt erlöse,
ist dies dein Amt**

These lines do not prove, however, that [Parsifal](#) is a redeemer or that it is his mission to redeem the world. Only that [Kundry](#), the heathen, sees these possibilities. Earlier the pious [Gurnemanz](#) too had seen potential in the boy. If [Parsifal](#) is not a Christ figure then at least he is seen as one with the potential to redeem, if not the entire world, at least [Kundry](#), [Amfortas](#) and the community of [Monsalvat](#).

**Redeem the world,
if that's your mission**

Behind the claim that [Parsifal](#) is the Aryan Christ lies the assumption that the agenda of *Parsifal* is about race, an assumption that we have already shown to be false. Wagner wrote that he was not concerned about the racial origins of Jesus of Nazareth: The blood of the Saviour which ran from his head and his wounds upon the cross; what sacrilege would it be to ask whether it belonged to the white race, or to any other race? - ***Herodom and Christendom***.

7. Conclusions

Although many people still take them for granted, on close examination the respective claims that Wagner was a racist, that he was obsessed with ideas about race and that a racist agenda can be detected in his last drama, turn out not only to be unsupported but also refuted by hard evidence.

Wagner's posthumous reputation has been seriously damaged by three factors. One of them is the unfortunate fact that [Adolf Hitler](#) was a great fan of Wagner's music, which has left an association between Wagner and Nazism, one that was exaggerated by Adorno and developed by Gutman. The second factor, in the English-speaking world, is the lack of readable and accurate translations of Wagner's prose writings. Whilst in the original German Wagner's prose is almost impenetrable, in Wm. Ashton Ellis' mangled rendering the original meaning is obscured or even, in many instances, lost completely. Recent and current writers about Wagner take advantage of this situation by "explaining" Wagner's ideas for those who cannot penetrate either his prose or his poetry. Their "explanations" are, more often than not, distortions that build upon the mistaken ideas of Adorno and Gutman. Last but not least, Wagner's reputation has been damaged by the distorted account of Wagner as man and artist presented in Gutman's book; in which it was argued, with more conviction than logic or evidence, that Wagner was a racist. Some of Gutman's disciples have added the allegation that Wagner's anti-Semitism was racial in character. The best evidence that Gutman could find to support his allegation that Wagner was a racist, was the summary of [Gobineau's](#) theories presented by Wagner in ***Herodom and Christendom***. Gutman misrepresented Wagner by claiming that these were his ideas, in other words, making Wagner appear as a racial theorist. This falsehood has been repeated by several other writers, despite the publication, since the appearance of Gutman's book, of *Cosima's Diaries* (1976) and the [Gobineau](#) correspondence (2000) respectively. In their treatment of the relationship between Wagner and [Gobineau](#), Gutman and his disciples have viciously

attacked Wagner for opinions that he not only did not hold but which he also rejected in his *Herodom* article. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that these writers were more concerned with finding sticks with which to beat Wagner than with the truth. Prominent among them is Paul L. Rose, whose anti-Wagner rant *Race and Revolution* was described by Michael Tanner as a prodigious work of hatred, and who asserts that Wagner the "racial theorist" invented racial anti-Semitism.

Gutman's fantastic interpretation of ***Parsifal*** rests on his idea that Wagner was a racist and a disciple of [Gobineau](#) and upon a fundamental misreading of the article *Herodom and Christendom* which he believed to reveal the ideas central to this drama. This interpretation has found widespread acceptance in particular in the USA. Therefore it is not unusual to encounter, especially in the US media, statements about ***Parsifal*** (for example in reviews of performances) which take it for granted that this work is a vegetarian concoction in which the main ingredients are race and anti-Semitism, seasoned with misogyny and homosexuality. Gutman's mistakes can be excused, to some extent, by his limited access to primary sources; they must be primarily attributed, however, to poor scholarship combined with a good measure of stupidity. On the other hand, the attacks on Wagner for his alleged racism (of which both ***Herodom and Christendom*** and ***Parsifal***, by circular argument, are claimed to be evidence) by Zelinsky, Rose, Weiner and others can only be attributed to malice and hatred. These attacks show no sign of abating.

A more reasoned critique of Wagner and his views on race has been presented, in a number of books and essays, by the distinguished Wagner scholar, Professor John Deathridge. Although he has consistently argued that Wagner was a racist (and not only where the Jews were concerned), Deathridge takes exception to the hysterical writings of Zelinsky and his followers:

"Taking his cue from, among other things, Wagner's description of Kundry's baptism and "annihilation" in *Cosima Wagner's diaries*

("annihilation" here referring to a quasi-Schopenhauerian negation of self and not to genocide), Zelinsky suggested that Kundry is "the representative of everything that Wagner associated with Judaism", including the wish for its destruction. There is no evidence for this whatsoever and indeed no one, not even Hitler, had ever made quite such an absurd claim... [Wagner] did compare Kundry with the "Wandering Jew", as we have seen, but only in the sense that she, too, is the victim of a "primeval curse" that condemns her to wander forever in constantly different guises, never able to die. That does not necessarily turn her into an allegory of Judaism. On the contrary, she seems about as far away from Wagner's idea of the consistent "purity" of the Jews as she can be -- the very opposite of the antirace she is supposed [by Zelinsky] to represent, which, quite unlike her ability to wander from one type of human being to another, is according to Wagner all the stronger, and hence all the more dangerous, precisely because of its immutable racial character."

[[Wagner Beyond Good and Evil](#), John Deathridge, Univ. of California Press 2008, p. 175]

Gutman's most fundamental error, with regard to *Parsifal*, was to ignore the 1865 [Prose Draft](#), which already contains all of the central ideas of the drama. In fact, as [Dr. Wolfgang Golther](#) pointed out nearly a century ago, the ideas which underly *Parsifal* can be found already in letters that Wagner wrote while developing the scenario during the late 1850s. These ideas, the basis of a detailed [Prose Draft](#) which Wagner wrote in August 1865, are not concerned with race, anti-Semitism, misogyny or vegetarianism. The reader can verify for himself or herself that those subjects do not appear in the [Prose Draft](#) of 1865 or in the [libretto](#) of 1877, nor are they discussed in Wagner's letters to [Mathilde Wesendonk](#). In 1877, before writing the poem/libretto, the prose draft was revised and expanded. Wagner fully developed the element of the [spear](#) as a connecting idea and motivation. From the revised draft Wagner wrote a [libretto](#) in the spring of that year. Therefore Gutman's claim that the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal* is based on ideas that occupied Wagner's mind in and around 1881 is evidently false and Gutman's fantastic interpretation of *Parsifal* (like his absurd interpretation of *Tristan*) is nonsense. His entire book belongs in the dustbin of history.

Footnote 1: Cosima's Diaries show that after meeting [Gobineau](#) for the second time, Wagner began reading some of his books, starting with *La Renaissance* in November 1880. In December he tried to read the poem *Amadis*, which he disliked, perhaps because of its racist undertones. Early in 1881 he moved on to the *Nouvelles*

asiatiques, which he enjoyed, and then to the *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races*, which he began in March and finished in May. Before parting from the Wagners, Gobineau presented Richard with a copy of his *Dogme et philosophie: Religions et philosophies dans l'Asie centrale*, which Wagner read with great interest.

Footnote 2: The term *regeneration writings* should be, although it has not been, limited to the article *Religion and Art* (written at Naples in July 1880, published in October of the same year) and its three increasingly cranky supplements (*What use is this knowledge?*, December 1880; the anti-Semitic rant, *Know thyself*, February 1881; and Wagner's attempt at reconciliation with Count Gobineau, *Heroism and Christianity*, translated by William Ashton Ellis under the title *Herodom and Christendom*, September 1881). Ellis, who translated (with more enthusiasm than accuracy) Wagner's prose writings, thought that the unfinished fragment *On the Womanly in the Human* should be regarded as the completion of Wagner's circle of his thoughts about regeneration. The attempts by some of the authors mentioned to include **all** of Wagner's articles written for the *Bayreuther Blätter* in the *regeneration writings* are no more than a conspiracy to mislead. As in the main article *Religion and Art* there are passages in its supplement *Herodom* which touch upon the ideas underlying *Parsifal*. This does not mean that these *regeneration writings* reveal anything about the creative process from which that drama resulted. These passages are more cases of looking back on the ideas that led Wagner to *Parsifal* from the changed perspective -- with its components of pacifism, mysticism and vegetarianism -- of his last years. Gutman's claim that the [libretto](#) of *Parsifal* emerged from that perspective (which he also failed to understand) was not justified.

Footnote 3: The [Gobineau](#) correspondence consists of 79 letters. Of these 49 were written by [Gobineau](#) to members of the Wagner family, 28 by Cosima Wagner and 2 by Richard Wagner. The letters have been edited by Eric Eugène and the edition was published in 2000 as *Richard et Cosima Wagner - Arthur Gobineau Correspondance*, Librairie Nizet ed., Saint-Genouph.

Footnote 4: The following paragraph is taken from notes that Wagner made in his occasional diary, the [Brown Book](#), in October 1881, when he was completing the [full orchestral score of Act 2](#). The section is headed, *Thoughts on the regeneration of mankind and of culture*, and may have been intended as the outline for another essay in the series of "regeneration writings". In the mingling of races, the blood of the nobler males is ruined by the baser feminine element: the masculine element suffers, character founders, whilst the women gain as much as to take the men's place... The feminine thus remains owing deliverance: here art -- as there in religion; the immaculate Virgin gives birth to the Saviour. Here Wagner is taking an idea from Gobineau and turning it into a different idea.

Source: <http://www.monsalvat.no/racism.htm>